

How to start a DevOps transformation

15 August 2019 | **Business Innovation, Software Engineering** | [Romano Roth](#)

Reading time: 3 minutes

At first glance, a DevOps transformation seems to be a major undertaking for any company. But with the right approach, you can keep the process lean and agile.

Start your DevOps transformation small

It's important to start small. Getting started, it's best to tackle small to medium-sized projects or products. These offer the advantage that changes require much less time and energy because decisions have less impact and involve fewer people. And you will encounter less resistance, as the teams and decision-makers will not feel overwhelmed or paralysed. This will increase self-confidence and create strong momentum.

Putting together a winning DevOps team

Getting the right people on board is a must. And the golden rule here is – generalists before specialists. It's also important that your team include innovators, early adopters and people who are respected throughout the company. This ensures that you have sufficient credibility and influence.

The brand new DevOps team needs to be freed up from any other work so that they can focus completely on the project. If possible, all team members should work in the same location and be exempted from corporate rules and guidelines wherever possible. This new team will then transform the first project or product thanks to DevOps.

Value flow

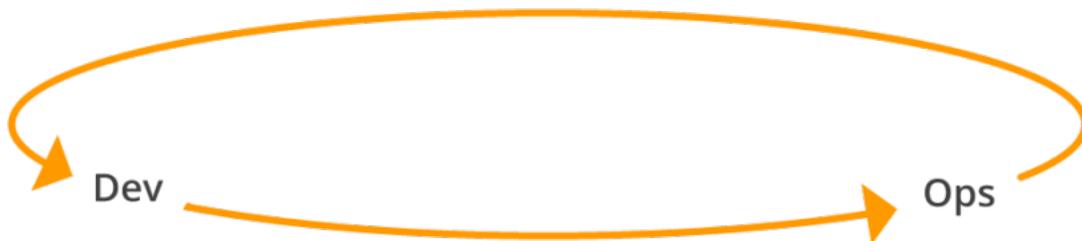
The first step is to optimise the value flow from development, to operations, right through to the customer. The goal is to have features flowing through to the customer as quickly as possible, as it is only there where value is generated. To achieve this, you need to make the work visible, reduce batch volumes and work intervals, and thereby increase quality.



First step of your DevOps transformation: Optimisation of the workflow from development, to operations, right through to the customer. (Image: Zühlke)

Feedback

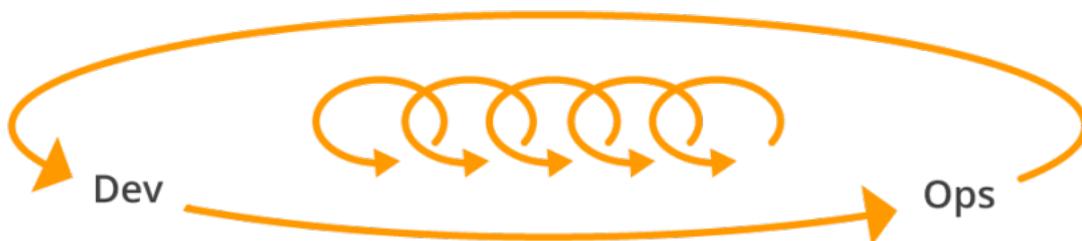
The second step is to introduce a flow of feedback. This ensures that feedback from customers, as well as any production problems, flows through to the business and back into development. And this means that you can discover problems more quickly and resolve them efficiently. You can use focused measurement and usage analysis to show the business which features are used, and how often. This helps the business decide whether a given feature should be expanded or not.



Second step: The introduction of a flow of feedback is part of the DevOps transformation. (Image: Zühlke)

This is what the DevOps culture looks like

The third step is to create a culture of trust, which will support experimentation and risk-taking. It will also put the team on a steeper learning curve, enabling it to adjust to market demand faster than the competition.



Last step: Selecting and transforming the next product. (Image: Zühlke)

Critical mass

As soon as the requested improvements are incorporated into the first product, you should be selecting and transforming the next project or product. This enables you to reach a critical mass, which makes it easier to undertake [further transformations with DevOps](#) and build alliances. Repeat this procedure until all desired projects and products are transformed.

No Magic

A [DevOps transformation is not magic](#). Any company can do it. The important thing is to start small, select the right people for the team and then constantly, continuously improve.